

Why Do I Have To Do This?

Carbon monoxide (CO), known as the *Invisible Killer*, is a colorless, odorless, poisonous gas that results from incomplete burning of fuels such as natural gas, propane, oil, wood, coal, and gasoline. Each year many people die from accidental CO poisoning and thousands more are injured. This law was passed to protect all of us from the dangers of carbon monoxide poisoning.

How Can I Tell if a CO Alarm Is Approved?

CO alarms are approved by an independent testing company such as Underwriters' Laboratories (UL), Underwriter's Laboratory of Canada (ULC), or International Approval Service/Canadian Standards Association (IAS/CSA). Be sure to look for the approval label when buying CO alarms. Most of the CO alarms currently sold in the Commonwealth meet these standards but it is a good idea to check and make sure they meet the standard before you purchase the alarms.

How Do I Meet the Requirements of the Law?

If you install CO alarms on every habitable level by March 31, 2006 and keep them in good working order you don't have to do anything else to be in compliance with the law. When you sell your home, you must have an inspection and certificate from the local fire department before the sale is final. Contact your local fire department directly – they will know what to do to assist you.

How Do I Know if I Have CO Poisoning?

The first symptoms of CO poisoning are similar to the flu (but without the fever). They include:

- Headache
- Fatigue
- Shortness of breath
- Nausea
- Dizziness

If you think you have symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning or your CO alarm is sounding, contact your fire department and leave the building immediately.

For more information about the requirements of the law contact your local fire department or visit the Massachusetts Department of Fire Services website at www.mass.gov/dfs.

Consumer's Guide

to Massachusetts
Requirements for

Carbon Monoxide Alarms



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CONSUMER'S GUIDE TO MASSACHUSETTS REQUIREMENTS FOR CARBON MONOXIDE ALARMS

In November 2005, Governor Mitt Romney signed "Nicole's Law" which places certain requirements on owners of all residential properties to install and maintain carbon monoxide (CO) alarms. The Board of Fire Prevention Regulations has developed the regulations (527 CMR 31.00) establishing the specific requirements of the law including the type, location, maintenance and inspection requirements for the alarms.

Who Is Impacted by this Law?

Generally speaking anyone who owns residential property regardless of size (i.e., 1- & 2-family homes, multi-family buildings, apartments, condominiums and townhouses, etc.) **that contains fossil burning fuel equipment** (i.e., oil, gas, wood, coal, etc.) **OR contains enclosed parking** (i.e., attached or enclosed garage) in Massachusetts, **is required to install CO alarms by March 31, 2006. In certain limited instances (see below)**, the installation requirements are deferred until **January 1, 2007**.

What Do I Have to Do?

Install CO alarms on every level of your home except for basements and attics that do not have habitable living spaces (i.e., family rooms, dens, etc.) by March 31, 2006.

What Kinds of CO Alarms Are Allowed?

There are several types of alarms that are allowed; they include:

- Battery powered with battery monitoring;
- Plug-in (AC powered) units with battery backup;

- AC primary power (hard-wired – usually involves hiring an electrician) with battery backup;
- Low-voltage or wireless alarms; and
- Qualified combination smoke detectors and CO alarms.

What Are Qualified Combination Detectors and Alarms?

Acceptable combination smoke detectors and carbon monoxide alarms must have simulated voice and tone alarms that clearly distinguish between the two types of emergencies. If you have questions about various types of smoke detectors, contact your local fire department.

What Am I Required to Do if I'm a Landlord?

Landlords must install CO alarms in each dwelling unit. Landlords also must inspect, test and maintain the CO alarms at least once a year or at the beginning of any rental period (such as lease renewal). Batteries are required to be replaced once a year. **Tenants** should report any problems with alarms to the landlord immediately and learn to recognize the difference between the smoke detector and the carbon monoxide alarm.

What Are Alternative Compliance Options?

The regulation allows for alternative compliance options that may be more practical for larger buildings with multiple dwelling units that contain minimal or no sources of CO inside the individual units. The option allows owners to target the CO alarm protection in only those areas

(i.e., rooms that contain boilers, hot water heaters, central laundry areas and all adjacent spaces, in addition to enclosed parking areas) that could be potential sources of the CO. This CO protection option requires hard-wiring or low-voltage wiring, monitoring (i.e., by an alarm company) and certain signal transmission requirements.

What Are the Limited Instances Where I Don't Have to Install CO Alarms until January 1, 2007?

Owners of residential buildings that notify the local fire department and choose the alternative compliance option and buildings owned by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts (i.e., public housing units) will not be required to install CO alarms until January 1, 2007.

Where Do I Have To Put These CO Alarms?

In most residences, carbon monoxide alarms are required to be located on every level of a home or dwelling unit including habitable portions of basements and attics. On levels with sleeping areas the alarms must be placed within ten feet of the bedroom doors.

CO alarms do not go inside garages, but in the adjacent living areas.

When Do I Have to Install CO Alarms?

Most residences are required to install CO alarms by March 31, 2006. After that date anyone who sells their property will be required to have an inspection by the fire department prior to the sale or transfer of their property.

What should you do?

Proper installation, operation, and maintenance of fuel-burning appliances in the home is the most important factor in reducing the risk of CO poisoning.

Make sure appliances are installed according to the manufacturer's instructions and the local codes. Most appliances should be installed by professionals.

Always follow the appliance manufacturer's directions for safe operation.

Have the heating system (including chimneys and vents) inspected and serviced annually by a trained service technician.

Examine vents and chimneys regularly for improper connections, visible cracks, rust or stains.

Look for problems that could indicate improper appliance operations:

- Decreased hot water supply
- Furnace unable to heat house or runs continuously
- Sooting, especially on appliances and vents
- Unfamiliar, or burning odor
- Increased moisture inside of windows

Operate portable generators outdoors and away from open doors, windows, and vents that could allow CO to come indoors.

In addition, install battery-operated CO alarms or plug-in CO alarms with battery back-up in your home. Every home should have a CO alarm in the hallway near the bedrooms in each separate sleeping area. The CO alarms should be certified to the requirements of the most recent UL, IAS, or CSA standard for CO alarms. Test your CO alarms frequently and replace dead batteries. A CO alarm can provide added protection, but is no substitute for proper installation, use and upkeep of appliances that are potential CO sources.

Symptoms of CO poisoning

The initial symptoms of CO poisoning are similar to the flu (but without the fever) They include:

- Headache
- Fatigue
- Shortness of breath
- Nausea
- Dizziness

If you suspect that you are experiencing CO poisoning, get fresh air immediately. Leave the home and call for assistance from a neighbor's home. You could lose consciousness and die from CO poisoning if you stay in the home.

Get medical attention immediately and inform medical staff that CO poisoning is suspected. Call the Fire Department to determine when it is safe to reenter the home.



To report a dangerous product or a product related injury, call CPSC's hotline at (800) 638-2772 or CPSC teletypewriter at (800) 638-8270.

Consumers can obtain recall information at CPSC's web site at <http://www.cpsc.gov>. Consumers can report product hazards to info@cpsc.gov.

U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission
Washington, DC 20207

The "Invisible" KILLER

Carbon Monoxide (CO) is the "invisible" killer. Carbon monoxide is a colorless and odorless gas. Every year more than 100 people in the United States die from unintentional exposure to carbon monoxide associated with consumer products.

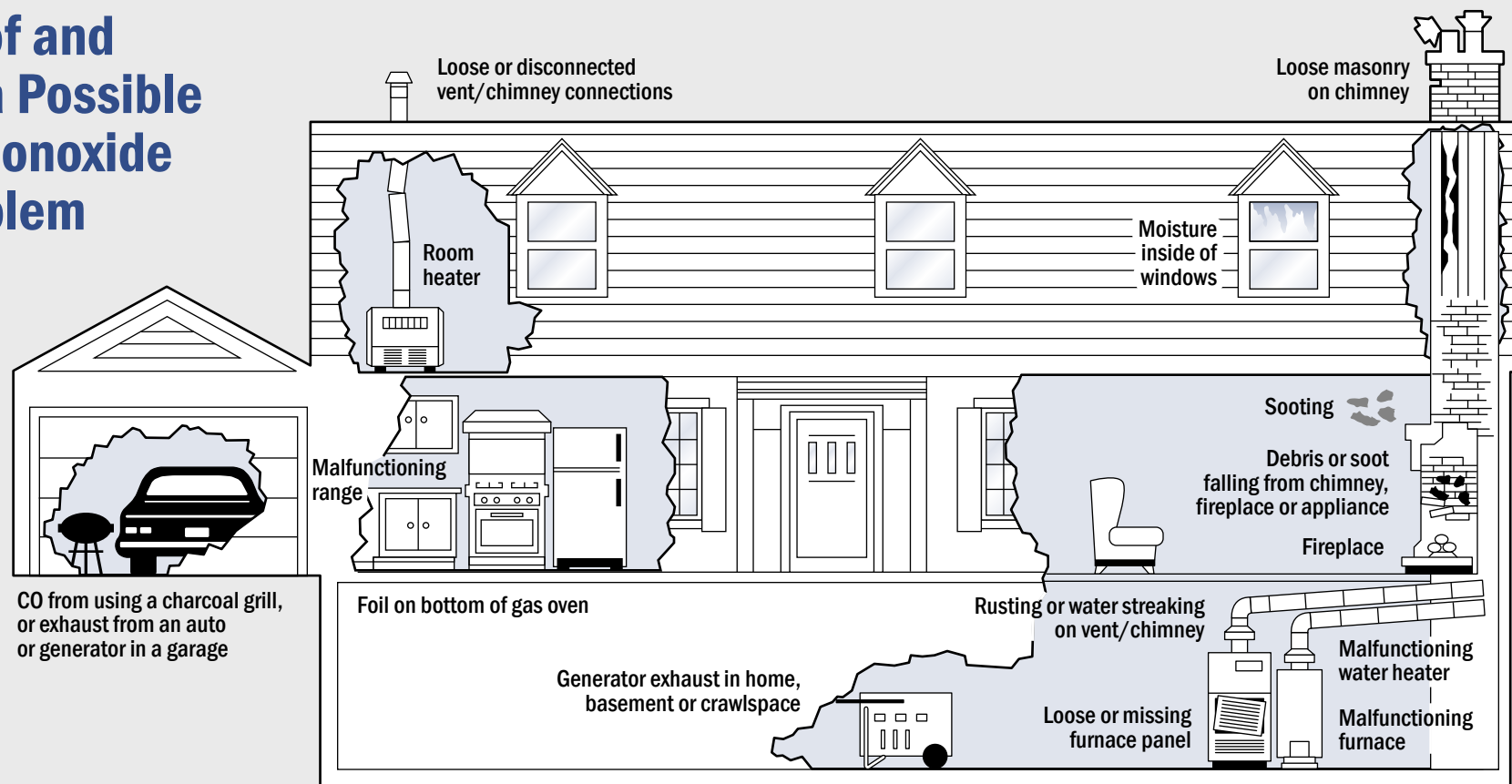
What is carbon monoxide?

Carbon monoxide is produced by burning fuel. Therefore, any fuel-burning appliance in your home is a potential CO source.

When cooking or heating appliances are kept in good working order, they produce little CO. Improperly operating appliances can produce fatal CO concentrations in your home.

Running a car or generator in an attached garage can cause fatal CO poisoning in the home. So can running a generator or burning charcoal in the basement, crawlspace, or living area of the home.

Sources of and Clues to a Possible Carbon Monoxide (CO) Problem



Carbon monoxide clues you can see...

- Rusting or water streaking on vent/chimney
- Loose or missing furnace panel
- Sooting
- Debris or soot falling from chimney, fireplace, or appliances
- Loose or disconnected vent/chimney, fireplace or appliance
- Loose masonry on chimney
- Moisture inside of windows

Carbon monoxide clues you cannot see...

- Internal appliance damage or malfunctioning components

- Improper burner adjustments
- Hidden blockage or damage in chimneys

Only a trained service technician can detect hidden problems and correct these conditions!

- CO poisoning symptoms have been experienced when you are home, but they lessen or disappear when you are away from home.

Warnings...

- Never leave a car running in a garage even with the garage door open.
- Never run a generator in the home, garage, or crawlspace. Opening doors and windows or

using fans will NOT prevent CO build-up in the home. When running a generator outdoors, keep it away from open windows and doors.

- Never burn charcoal in homes, tents, vehicles, or garages.
- Never install or service combustion appliances without proper knowledge, skills, and tools.
- Never use a gas range, oven, or dryer for heating.
- Never put foil on bottom of a gas oven because it interferes with combustion.
- Never operate an unvented gas-burning appliance in a closed room or in a room in which you are sleeping.